

# *Alnombak*

a poetic short story by Ken Delnero

Photographs of the Monadnock region of New Hampshire  
by Anne & Marcel Fontaine

INNERCIRCLE PUBLISHING

A decorative flourish consisting of a horizontal line with a central oval containing a stylized 'C' or 'G' shape, with elegant, flowing lines extending upwards and downwards from the central element.

Alnombak  
a poetic short story  
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# *“Alnombak”*

Take a journey through an old man’s mind,  
guided by an aboriginal spirit named  
Tebokw Skweda...(Night Fire).

Experience the bloody fields of war,  
and the scattered moments of revolution.

Travel to a time of great peace and  
compassion, a world not so far away...  
just slightly further than the human mind  
can reach today.

**Wlipamkanni Nedobak...**

*(Travel well my friends...)*

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The acquisition of knowledge  
Is a bird that flies  
From branch to branch

But to possess the human spirit  
Is to soar above  
In endless flight



“N’Dakinna”  
(The World)

Imagination...  
Use it as your body drifts  
Carried on dry waves  
Waves of air  
In an ancient atmosphere

Dim light filters  
From beneath a smooth birch door  
Behind it sleeps a figure gray  
Embraced by the metal frame  
And wire spoke wheels  
Wheels that have become his feet  
His motion machine

Head tilted down in sleep  
With craggy flesh  
Weathered hard by time  
A presence nearly dead  
...But his spirit glows  
Unlike the stark florescent room  
His mind is warm and bright  
Come with me now...  
Enter his thoughts  
This passionate world  
Beyond the suffering flesh

I’ve made my home within this man  
My brother of 92 years



“Nijia”  
(Brother)

Kwi Kwi Nedobak <sup>(1)</sup>  
You may be wondering  
Who you’re traveling with  
Through my brother’s mind

I’ll tell you now  
I’ve dwelled here for all time  
To guide his hands  
And those before  
To speak in tongues that are no more  
In birth and death  
From green shadow lands I come  
Beneath Menonadenak <sup>(2)</sup>  
When forest clung  
To primal soil and rocky peak  
Great spirit mountain  
Most complete

Tebokw Skweda is my name  
Night fire burning brilliant flame  
Cross lifetimes I have traveled  
As all time has unraveled  
Instrument of my Nijia’s mind

The wind erodes only the surface  
Of my great brother  
For he is of granite  
And I...am infinity

(1) Kwi Kwi Nedobak: Greetings my friends  
(2) Menonadenak: Menodanock / spirit mountain/ located in southern New Hampshire



“Spirit Way”

No sadness settles  
Within the spirit world  
It's a river crossed  
Swift and bottomless  
Flowing to the west  
And when you make the journey  
Distress is left behind

For some the currents lead  
To a tranquil azure sea  
And others like myself  
Travel endlessly  
...In a ribbon of water  
That twists through time  
Swirls into space  
Gently bending on the air  
...In the mind

Above this spirit way  
I will soar  
A golden eyed wind eagle  
Piercing the blackest night  
Emerging into a land of great peace

I glide above the banks of the spirit river  
Looking out over the dense forest  
Of the human mind  
And see my Nijia  
Blazing a trail  
That will lead mankind to the west  
Beyond the tortured world of the physical



“Prelude To A Nightmare”

My Nijia  
A man of dreams  
Dreams that have carried him  
Through his youth  
Through the barbarous red fields of war  
And into the scattered times of revolution  
His most recent visions  
Bring terrifying images  
Fragments of pain  
Suffering he’s witnessed  
Over nine decades

Within my space  
Pulsing voltage  
Narrow bolts of lightning  
Tracing nerves  
Striking the limits of his mind  
Till only a memory remains  
A memory that drifts down  
Paper in the wind  
Tumbling down  
A stack of old dusty newspapers  
Overturned  
Tumbling down  
Scattered thoughts  
Printed words  
On the floor in a random pile  
The article  
The memory that  
At one time had pertinence  
A painful remembrance  
Nijia’s mind is a dark fog  
Lightning continues to erupt  
Exploding electric storm of sadness  
Delivering the image,



The distressing moment  
A teenage boys face  
Like an icy blue winter moon  
Rising in my brother's unconscious mind  
Nijia wanders deeper into this dream world  
Tears glisten and run down  
The furrows plowed by time  
Considering the loss of his childhood friend



“1969”  
(The Nightmare)

A young man sits quietly  
At an enameled kitchen table  
A disturbing silence surrounds him  
In his darkness  
His pain  
He sees only blackness

Softly  
He stands within his own mind  
Viewing the world through windows  
Dimly lit  
His plan for escape spoken calmly  
Mouth barely moving as the words emerge

**“I’ll just walk right out of this place.”**

The young man’s hands tremble  
Numbed by cold steel grasped  
Flat to the floor  
His bear right foot  
Rising in contrast to the left  
And for that fraction of a second  
His complete hopelessness dictates his action  
The smoky odor of flashed gunpowder  
...Un-smelled  
The flame  
...Never viewed  
The kitchen again is filled with un-natural silence  
A doorway opens to the back of the teenager’s head  
He walks cleanly through  
Escaping  
Red ink pours freely across the newspapers  
Black words emerge  
Revealing



(Eddy's premature death...August 7th, 1969)

As the image fades in my Nijia's thoughts  
A shotgun blast  
Jolts him to a sad state of consciousness  
Though seventy-five years have passed  
The nightmare still haunts him  
Nijia wonders;

**“Was there not one thing I could have done or said?”**

...There is no answer



“Alnombak”

I've dwelled within  
And surrounded this ancient man  
Since his birth  
In the yellow dawn of the East  
His early years  
Troublesome  
Difficult  
But as the moons passed  
The shared blood flowed between us  
I started to imagine  
His Grandmother  
Perhaps even an earlier link  
Connected us  
Merging my spirit with his mind  
Though I couldn't feel it at first  
I came to realize  
He is of my people  
Alnombak  
...The human beings



## “Beyond Simple Flesh”

Many years have passed  
Since I camped among my own people  
A tribe  
Connected to the world  
A world shared with nature

As my mortal flesh faded  
I returned to this natural world  
My body left atop Menondenak  
Three centuries ago

Yet still my travels continue

My labors are without end

I am the axe  
The planting stick  
A simple tool  
To be used to complete the plan  
The plan created by the great spirits  
That soar beyond the openings in the sky

There are those of you  
That have felt the affects of these implements  
Perhaps you don't yet realize your involvement  
Mine is the power that  
Guides your hands to the soil,  
Pressing your fingers deep in the earth  
You'll become the connecting roots of a great tree  
You will be a part of all that exists  
Surrounds  
Physical and beyond  
For you have been chosen  
And will survive beyond the flesh  
...To labor as I do



“The Garden Of Thought”

We rest now  
Alert and aware  
We rest embraced by cold arms  
Of the chair with wheels  
Rattling breath, lung  
Stale air filling us  
Waiting...  
For the next visitor  
Waiting...  
Maybe a relative  
Waiting...  
An old acquaintance  
Perhaps even death will join us  
None are to be feared

Quiet thoughts  
Whisper softly within my brother’s mind  
A mind entombed within his ravaged body

Decades become moments  
Moments that turn to lifetimes  
Memories have been his only strength  
Struggling with the slow progression of time  
Time that consumes all it encounters  
Moving deliberately  
Like a slug  
Making its way through a garden  
Consuming all...

And we wait...  
Thankful the memories remain clear



“The Childhood Friend”

Eddy...  
A more addictive personality  
Would be difficult to imagine  
Led by his emotions  
Emotions that took him to the cliff’s edge  
Thrown to the jagged rocks below  
By the drugs  
And the times  
That controlled his mind

For my Nijia  
The image of his loss  
Is a wound that never heals

Eddy...  
Could not endure  
The painful moments of history  
A world resembling an unstable platform  
Tipping awkwardly  
Till his feet no longer  
Could make a foothold

Eddy...  
His mind that once burned with a blue heat  
Had been reduced to a dull flickering flame  
Self-extinguished

Strange how suddenly...  
How violently...  
Friendship can be lost



## “War”

A war  
More senseless than those before  
Spinning out of control  
Young life lost  
On a distant shore

Animal man  
Driven...  
By the greed of Wougwses <sup>(1)</sup>  
Wearing the horrifying toothed mask  
Of those who met death in the past  
The absurd costume  
The terrifying scene  
Man dances for death  
Dances in flames of blood  
Slaughters generations  
Leaving a trail, red scraps of cloth  
Thinking one day  
He'll follow them home...

But there will be no peaceful land to return to

Wougwses <sup>(1)</sup> screams the battle howl  
Man, animal, warrior  
Picks up the bloody mask in the name of greed  
And lays down his brother  
With a disturbingly familiar rhythm

(1) Wougwses; The fox.



“Death Itself”

Days pass  
As lifetimes do  
Memories rise and swell  
Like the flood waters of spring  
Then recede  
To be contained by the muddy banks of the mind  
No information  
For a man of dreams  
Would be death itself  
Non-existence

An impossible notion...

As I said  
My Nijia is a man of dreams  
In that thought alone is contained his reason  
His survival



“Visions”

A nailed hand  
Bleeding  
Appears...  
Convulsing,  
It seems to bid greeting and farewell  
In a single quivering movement

Gray figures draw close  
Then retreat...  
A black form emerges  
More defined  
His hands on fire  
...Reaching

A car speeds from the darkness  
It passes  
“Fear This”  
attached to the bumper  
Leaving only a foul vapor in its path

Then a faint light  
From a distant fire...  
Almost heartbreaking

We drift again...

In the dim illumination  
The car re-materializes  
From behind a curtain  
Bearing down  
Direction fixed

Blue eyes float  
In moist pools  
Glisten and floress



A soft glow filters through the room

The vehicle exits  
Through the ceiling directly above  
The bumper sticker remains  
Affixed to the cracked plaster

The vision passes...

Alone again with only our thoughts  
My Nijia stares into the mirror  
At a disturbed reflection  
And for a split second  
Captures the image  
Sees my eyes looking back from the glass  
The reflection ripples like water  
He no longer sees a decomposing revolutionary...  
...He sees the ancient stare of his brother